

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 31, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Our society's greatest resource is its youth. Young Americans today are more aware than ever before of the problems and the opportunities before us. They have in high degree the ideals, vision, sensitivity and energy that assure our future.

We who direct the affairs of government have a special obligation to provide for the constructive use of these qualities -- to enlarge the participation and involvement of young people in government. How well we communicate with youth and seek the advantage of their abilities will influence our effectiveness in meeting our responsibilities.

I would like you to make a thorough and critical review of how your managers determine long-range staffing needs, attract talented young people to their staffs, utilize and develop them, and provide mechanisms through which ideas can be expressed and considered. Each department and agency must assure that:

- Manpower planning provides for an adequate and continuing intake of career trainees to meet future requirements in the administrative, professional and technical fields.
- Young people are placed in jobs that challenge their full abilities and provide opportunities to grow, innovate and contribute in a real way to the work of the organization.
- Young professionals are exposed to the decision-making processes and to a broad view of their agencies' missions.
- Open channels for communication are established and freely used, and provide for listening, considering and responding, with fast means for ideas to reach officials who can act on them.

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- All supervisors understand how much they influence young employees' job attitudes and career decisions through their receptivity, their interest and their flexibility.

In addition to what is done within government, we must build other links with American youth. Insulation from the operations of government generates misunderstanding and misconceptions. Efforts must be made to provide knowledge about activities being undertaken to solve complex problems and meet human needs. Among the steps which managers can take to bring this about are these:

- Enable Federal officials to appear on campuses as guest lecturers and speakers in their areas of primary interest.
- Encourage able professional employees to accept appointments as part-time faculty members.
- Provide opportunities for faculty members to be employed during breaks in their academic schedules where their expertise can be of benefit to government programs.
- Employ students in temporary jobs related to their careers, through the summer intern program and other plans designed to provide a practical exposure to government operations.
- Assure that staff members who recruit on campus are so well suited to their assignments that you would be pleased to have them regarded as your personal representatives.
- Inform academic institutions about government programs and the contributions made by their graduates and faculty.

I have asked the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission to provide leadership in this vital area and to advise me of significant developments and progress.

The beginning of this decade is a fitting time for us to demonstrate our commitment to the full involvement of today's youth in the processes of government which will help shape their tomorrow and ours. Only with the help of this generation can we meet the challenges of the 1970s.